Church Union News and Views

Organ of the Continuation Committee

of the

South India Joint Committee on Union

Vol. III–4 JULY 1932 – May 1934 No. 1

CONTENTS

		Page
1.	A MESSAGE FROM THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON UNION IN SOUTH INDIA	1
2.	EDITORIALS	6
3.	REPORT OF THE 10th SESSION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON UNION	13
4.	ARTICLES	21
5.	CLIPPINGS	29

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AND
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CHURCH UNION

News and Views

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THE LORD BISHOP OF MADRAS REV. J. S. M. HOOPER, M.A.

REV. J. J. BANNINGA, D.D.

(*Managing Editor.*)

Publishers

THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY, PARK TOWN, MADRAS.

Vol. III **JULY 1932** **No. 1**

A Message from the Joint Committee on Union in South India

We who are met together in Joint Committee on behalf of the cause of union in South India feel moved to share with the Churches of which we are representatives, a call which has come powerfully home to us during our days of retreat and conference together.

We have now been brought by God's blessing through many difficulties to substantial agreement concerning the terms of union, and as we draw near at last to the promised land towards which our eyes are set, and recall the love and patience with which God has led us through what have sometimes seemed to be weary years of wandering in the wilderness, we are filled with great confidence that His purpose in guiding us to this union is that there may be 'not merely greater fellowship and peace within the Church, and greater eagerness for the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, but also a greater release of divine power and greater effectiveness for the establishment of His Kingdom on earth'.

Our Lord, under the very shadow of the Cross, and seeing as it were in vision the multitudes of those who through His death should be won to God, prayed for them this above all, 'that they might be one

that the world might believe that God had sent Him'. So long as the Church is divided and rent asunder, it cannot bear its true witness to the divine mission of its Master; but, as His prayer for unity finds fulfilment, it will be able again to bear that witness, and the world will believe.

The Church is the Body of Christ, the instrument through which He designs to do His work in the world. How can He work as He desires to work through a Body which is crippled by divisions among its members? He has surely been drawing us together, in order that through us in union He may be able to achieve His purposes as He cannot achieve them through us in separation.

We ask you, then, to ponder afresh with us this will of God for the unity of the Church, and to join us in yet more earnest prayer and endeavour for its accomplishment.

But God's purpose depends on our co-operation and may be frustrated by our sin. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that, unless the movement for union is accompanied by some real renewal of spiritual life within the Church, it may be of no avail. If the union when it comes is merely a matter of outward organization, accompanied by no mighty working of the Spirit of God, the united Church which results from it may well prove to be still-born. Hence we have become deeply conscious that while God is calling us to union, He is calling us also, in preparation for that union, to a deeper reality of penitence and faith and prayer.

He is calling us to ***penitence*** for our sins which have hindered His designs,—for our self-satisfaction, our prejudices, our want of charity and of the large understanding of true sympathy, our blindness of heart, our self-centredness. He is asking of us now the humility of mind, which will lead us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but rather 'each to esteem other better than himself'. He is asking of us the humility of will, by which we surrender our own way submitting our purposes to God's purpose, our wills to His will. He is asking of us also the humility of heart, by which we refrain from

inordinate desires and from seeking great things for ourselves and rather feed upon Him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

He is calling us to *faith*,—to a new vision of Himself and of the unsearchable riches of Christ. The things which God has done for us hitherto are as nothing compared with those which He is waiting to do for us, if only His purpose be not hindered by our unbelief. But this faith and vision are the gift of God's Spirit, and will come to us only through a new outpouring of that Spirit upon us and upon the whole Church.

Therefore God is calling us also to *prayer*,—not only earnest and continuous prayer for the union of the Church but also for a fresh Pentecost of spiritual renewal; that, as we repent and turn unto God, 'there may come seasons of refreshment from the presence of the Lord'. We desire in brotherly humility and love to beg of you, in the name of our Lord, that you will continually unite your prayers with ours, that our Churches may indeed turn anew to God in penitence and faith, and receive a fresh baptism by His Spirit, as they approach the consummation of this union.

When we consider the present state of India and the dark days which seem to be before it, may we not well believe that one purpose which our Heavenly Father has in bringing the Church of South India into being, is that of giving it a large part in the task of healing the wounds of a divided and distracted country and that for this end He desires and designs to pour out His Holy Spirit abundantly upon it, and to fill it with the brotherly love and zeal and self-denial which were the distinctive marks of the Church in Apostolic days. What greater tragedy could there be than that through sloth and self-love we should fail of this high vocation?

We are asking that Sunday, August 21, may be observed in the uniting Churches and by all those in India who are in sympathy with our ideals, as a day of special prayer for union and for spiritual renewal; but we hope that this day of prayer will be regarded, not as sufficient in itself, but rather as initiating throughout the Churches a movement

of continuous prayer for both these ends; and we hope that in many centres it may be found possible to hold Retreat-conferences with the same objects in view.

If we will but offer to our Lord some real measure of humble obedience and faith, He will surely do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

In churches where special services are held on the 21st of August, in accordance with the suggestion made in the accompanying letter, or at any time when special prayer is offered for unity, use may be made of the following, if desired:

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

N.B.—These passages have been chosen as being suitable either for public reading or in framing prayers and thanksgivings.

Psalms 85, 122, 133. Ezekiel 34: 11-15. Daniel 9: 4-10, 18, 19. Philippians 1: 3-11. Revelation 5: 9-14.

The service may be preceded by and interspersed with periods of silence, for the recollection of the presence of God and of His promise to hear the prayers of His people.

1. CONFESSION AND PENITENCE

That we, the people of Christ, so imperfectly manifest His spirit.

That we are so often blind to the purposes of God, and indifferent to His calls.

That we are too ready to insist upon our own way, and are not sufficiently considerate of others or willing to learn from them.

That Christ is still unknown to so many of those around us.

That the divisions of the Church hinder it from fulfilling its mission to carry the Gospel to the whole world.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

2. THANKSGIVING

That God is giving to His Church in these days the vision of unity, and the desire to attain to it.

That the Holy Spirit is inspiring and guiding the movement toward unity in South India.

That His presence has been so abundantly manifest in the meetings of the Joint Committee and in the retreats connected with it.

That differences, which at first seemed irreconcilable, have yielded to patience and forbearance through the blessing of God.

That so large a measure of agreement has been reached as to the basis of union and the constitution of the united Church.

That there is such good hope and assurance of the consummation of union at no very distant date.

Thanks be unto Thee, O God.

3. INTERCESSION AND PRAYER

That God will pour out His Spirit upon the uniting Churches, stirring the hearts of all to true repentance, and kindling them to service and self-denial, so that the united Church may be filled with power from on high.

That none of the difficulties yet remaining may be permitted to prevent or delay the consummation of union.

That to all Christian people there may be given a fuller understanding of our Lord's will for the unity of His Church.

That the members of the uniting Churches may be inspired by an eager desire for union, and may pray and labour faithfully for its fulfilment.

That God's blessing may rest abundantly upon the Retreat Conferences to be held in various centres, that through them the cause of union may be forwarded and the spiritual life of the Churches quickened.

That the Continuation Committee may be guided in planning and carrying on the work preparatory to the consummation of union.

That all who are brought into the united Church may continue to learn of one another, and together to learn of God, so that they may be drawn still closer together in knowledge and love and service.

That God will use the united Church to bring many to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the experience of His salvation, and the fellowship of His body the Church.

That the united Church may be able by God's grace to contribute to the bringing of healing and peace and new life to a divided and distracted India.

That through the union of the Churches new spiritual energies may be released for the establishment of the Kingdom of God in this land and throughout the world.

That union may be extended to other Churches in India and in other lands, so that the time may be brought nearer for which our Lord prayed, when there shall be 'one flock', following and witnessing to the 'one Shepherd'.

Lord, hear our prayer, and let our cry come unto Thee.

[This has been translated into Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese, and Malayalam. Copies of the English and Kanarese editions can be had on application to the Wesleyan Mission Press, Mysore; of the Tamil edition from the Rev. Dr. Banninga, Pasumalai; of the Telugu edition from the Curator, Church Book Room, Bezwada; and of the Malayalam, from Rev. J. Kuriyan, Kottayam, Travancore.]

Editorials

The Bangalore Meeting

This issue of *Church Union News and Views* will be largely a report of the Bangalore meetings. It is a matter for deep gratitude to our Heavenly Father that this meeting was held, that there was so great harmony among all the members and that all the modifications in the Scheme that were asked for could be taken up one by one and settled to the satisfaction of all present.

To those who were present this was a manifestation that they were being guided by the Holy Spirit. At the close of their meeting they could truly and conscientiously say for themselves and for the results of their meeting, 'It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us'. They did ask before they came to the meeting, and during the meeting at regular stated times, and privately at all times that the Holy Spirit should be present, and they confidently believe that their prayers were heard and answered.

As an illustration testifying to this fact we might say that, during the discussion on the Thirty Year Period, it looked very much as though all could not agree. The members of the S.I.U.C. felt very strongly that the resolution as it stood was weighted against any possible fellowship with the Free Churches after the 30 Year Period was over. To them it looked as though the united Church must become an exclusive Church with a completely unified ministry and they naturally feared that such a rule regarding the ministry would make it impossible to have fellowship with the Free Churches that might remain at that time. On the other hand those that believe in the rule of an episcopal ministry felt that their whole adherence to the Scheme and their hope for a unified ministry rested upon this great principle of having a ministry that would be completely episcopal.

The question was discussed at length. Two or three times solutions were suggested that seemed to offer a way out of the difficulty and these were referred to small sub-committees for drafting. When reported, however, they proved not to be the solution. The discussion was reopened. Rather strong views were expressed on all sides. It looked almost like a deadlock. Finally a member suggested that we all keep quiet for a few moments and seek divine guidance. This was done. At the close of the period of prayer one or two spoke briefly and then a member of the committee suggested what at once appealed to all as the solution of the problem. This was referred to a small drafting committee and reported at the next session and unanimously adopted.

In this solution the 30 Year Period remains, for all recognise that the Church after union will be an autonomous Church that must decide all questions for itself sooner or later. Hence the 30 Year Period is not merely a recognition of the authority of the Church but is an understanding that the Church will not exercise its authority before that period is over. At the end of that period the Church will have to face the whole situation. But the resolution now places before the Church both aspects of the question. First, the unification of the Ministry which all agree must be an episcopal ministry at least as far as the permanent regular ministry of the Church is concerned. On the other hand the Church must also face the problem of fellowship with the Free Churches of that day, especially with those Churches from which sections of the united Church have come. This is really provided for in the Basis of Union where it is definitely stated that fellowship with these Churches shall not only be maintained at the beginning of this union but that the Church 'should constantly seek to widen and strengthen this fellowship and to work towards the goal of the full union in one body of all parts of the Church of Christ.' This principle is not subject to any time limit. That is a fundamental principle in the united Church and consequently at the end of the 30 Year Period the Church must face this principle as well as the one of the unification of the ministry and on the basis of their careful, prayerful consideration of these two principles the Church must then decide what shall be its attitude toward the continuance of exceptions to an episcopally ordained ministry.

Everyone will recognise this as eminently fair. Like practically all other parts of the 'Proposed Scheme' that have been the subject of discussion, the solutions that came appear to the members of the Joint Committee as impartial conclusions based on all the facts concerned. It is true that in some respects the 'Proposed Scheme' may be called a document of compromise. A better name would be a document of comprehension. There has been no attempt or intention that the Proposed Scheme should set forth only one aspect of the principles and life of the Christian Church. It is frankly recognised that in the Church after union there will not be complete uniformity of either belief or practice. There are certain great fundamental principles on which we all stand. There are a great many other extremely important principles concerning which we have different interpretations. But coming into the Church as a united body we shall all be brethren together serving one Lord and Master with the great purpose of establishing His Church here in this world. By being engaged in this great service together we believe that we shall grow to new heights of devotion and of fellowship which will make us in every way stronger for the work before us and better exponents of the revelation that is given to us.

The Appeal

Printed as the first article in this issue of *Church Union News and Views* there appears an appeal to the Churches for confession, prayer, and thanksgiving in connection with this Union Movement. It is first of all an appeal to the congregations that are contemplating this union and each such is asked to arrange for a special day of prayer on the 21st of August when not only prayer shall be made in the services of that day but when small groups of people are asked to come together and to form themselves into bands that shall continue to pray and work for the union of these Churches.

Not only the Churches in South India that are contemplating this union but friends throughout all India and other lands who are in sympathy with this movement are asked to make that day a day of special prayer and to make this subject a special prayer from day to day until success is achieved. We believe that the movement was begun in prayer. We believe that it has been continued in prayer. We believe that the only way it will be consummated will be in prayer. And we feel very strongly that if we unite in prayer the consummation will be certain.

Business Arrangements

For more than 12 years the Joint Committee on union has been considering the principles involved in this Scheme. The first meeting of the Committee was held in March, 1920, just before the Anglican Bishops gathered together that year in the Lambeth Conference. The meeting just held in Bangalore was the tenth meeting and all these meetings have been concerned with the principles of Union.

It was felt that now that practically all the suggestions for modifications to the Proposed Scheme had been dealt with, the time had come when a forward step should be taken looking to the drafting of the final documents that must be adopted for the united Church and for the careful consideration of all administrative and business matters connected with the union. Hence the Joint Committee appointed smaller groups to deal with these matters. There is first of all a group consisting of the Rt. Rev. The Bishop of Tinnevelly, Rev. H. Gulliford, Rev. J. J. Banninga, Rev. N. G. Ponnaiya and Mr. C. J. Lucas, who will prepare a redraft of the Basis of Union as a historic document and the constitution as it will be for the Church after union. The Proposed Scheme has been a statement of principles that will be contained in the constitution. Now these items will be redrafted so as to become the constitution itself.

Then another Committee consisting of the Bishop of Madras, Rev. C. H. Monahan, Rev. G. A. Parker and Mr. W. H. Warren, was appointed whose principal work will be to investigate the financial resources of the present Churches together with all their organizations and institutions to see how these can be co-ordinated and to see what will be the needs, financial and administrative, of the Church after union. This Committee will also investigate the question of territorial division into diocesan areas. It is suggested that at the beginning there should be 10 to 12 such areas each with its own bishop and that in each area as far as possible at least two of the uniting Churches shall be represented. It is hoped that at least a preliminary draft of these documents and reports will be ready for the meeting of the Continuation Committee to be held on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of August. If sufficient progress has been made by that time the Continuation Committee may call the Joint Committee together for another session. It is more likely, however, that the Continuation Committee itself will have to go forward with this work and call a meeting of the Joint Committee some time early in 1933. All this work is of extreme importance and your interest not only but your co-operation in prayer is earnestly solicited.

Retreats and Publications

It has frequently been said that this movement for Church Union is not an official, formal movement but that it is a spiritual experience expressing itself in the life and fellowship of the Christians of South India. A mere formal, official movement must die before it is born and could never have any life in its members. A truly spiritual life must eminently express itself in union. It is without doubt this deep, spiritual fellowship that Indian Christians had with one another during the past generation or two that makes this Church Union a necessity. As more and more these Indian Christians move about their country they feel there must be union in the Church so that wheresoever they are they may be in their spiritual home.

Realising this the Joint Committee had made definite arrangements for the holding of retreats and for the publication of literature that will explain the movement and help even the village Christian to understand its implications.

In the retreats the spiritual aspect of union will be emphasised more than the administrative. We do not in the least pretend to say that the administrative or organizational side of the work may be altogether neglected. But we do believe that the spiritual is the more important and therefore if members of the various Churches can get together and each give to all present their best spiritual gifts we are sure that these retreats will bring us all

nearer to the throne of Grace. It is hoped that a large number both of the clergy and of the laity will be present at these meetings and that by prayer and meditation and fellowship with the Lord's Table such groups will be made one in the Spirit.

The Publications Committee with Rev. H. Gulliford as convener has also been appointed and it will be their task to prepare leaflets and articles that will be widely distributed, in which the various aspects of the movement will be explained and set forth and by means of which it is also hoped the spiritual blessings of union can be made known to all. Efforts are being made to obtain the names of all who should receive this literature and the pastors of churches, especially, are requested to co-operate. The first document to be sent out will be the Appeal for the Day of Prayer. If you have not received that by the time you get this issue of *Church Union News and Views*, please write to Mr. Gulliford at once (Address 'Teddington', Coonoor) giving him your name and address telling him how many copies of the literature either in English or your Vernacular you can use in your station. As this is a work of extreme importance we trust that all will co-operate in order that the convener and his committee may accomplish their purpose.

A Venture in Faith

No one who has ever set his foot upon a modern steamer to go from one great port to some other port, perhaps on the other side of the world, has failed to realise that his action was not merely physical but that it was in a very large sense spiritual, for in entrusting himself to that vessel and to its officers he is showing faith in all the arrangements that have been made, showing that he dares to trust them and believes that they will bring him to his destination.

The Movement for Church Union is not unlike this venture in faith which the voyager undertakes. No one can be absolutely certain when he sets his foot upon a steamer that that steamer will reach its destination. Within the last few years there have been several glaring instances of vessels, even on their maiden voyages, that did not reach their destination. One may say with reference to this Church Union Movement that the ship in which they are asked to embark is not sea worthy, not well equipped, not well officered, and that therefore it will never reach its destination. On the other hand one can say *if he has faith* that, whatever defects there may be in the Scheme, the intention and the hope of those who have carried on the negotiations, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit Himself, which had been manifest in many points, are a sufficient guarantee to assure one that, whatever defects there may be in the Scheme, the goal will be reached in safety,

for unlike a ship a Scheme of Union can be modified and built up as it goes along on its voyage. This is especially true when those directing the union movement are pledged through and through to seeking the Will of God and following the leadership that He gives.

A venture in faith? Yes, but as Carey said at the beginning of his venture 'The future is as bright as the promises of God'.

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper

It will be remembered that at its meeting in February, 1932, the Episcopal Synod of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon said that

> 'a majority of the Synod is unwilling to limit the liberty of the delegates in this matter or to call in question the action of any who feels impelled, in view of the agreement already reached and in confident expectation that full agreement will be attained, to join in the Lord's Supper celebrated by ministers of the other uniting Churches at meetings of the Joint Committee and Retreats organized directly by it.'

In conformity with this resolution the conveners of the Committees on Union of the three Churches arranged that there should be a celebration of the Lord's Supper on each of the three days set aside for business matters in connection with the meeting.

On the first day the Bishop of Nasik conducted a retreat in which the members of the Committee gave themselves up to meditation and prayer, both private and public. It was a day of spiritual fellowship and communion with God, as well as repentance, and confession, and consecration to the task at hand.

On Thursday morning the Bishop of Madras assisted by Rev. Mr. Fry of St. Mark's, Bangalore, celebrated and practically all members of the Joint Committee were present. On Friday morning the Rev. W. H. Spencer assisted by Rev. S. M. Devadass celebrated and representatives from all the Churches were present. On the last day of the meeting, Rev. A. Silver of the Madras Church Council of the S.I.U.C. celebrated, assisted by Rev. Meshach Peter, Moderator of the S.I.U.C., and Dr. J. J. Banninga, Secretary of the Joint Committee. At all these services members of all three Churches were present.

On all three occasions there was a genuine spiritual fellowship such as the Committee had never known in any of its previous meetings. They were meeting their Lord together at His Table and there was no doubt in the mind of anyone present that the Lord Himself was there and that He, in accordance with His promises, bestowed His blessing. There can be no doubt that the influence of this spiritual fellowship was felt all through

the meeting and that much more work was accomplished in the three days of business than the Committee has ever been able to do in the same length of time hitherto.

At the close of the meeting the Wesleyan and S.I.U.C. members gathered together and passed the following resolution unanimously :—

'We, the Wesleyan and S.I.U.C. members of the Joint Committee on Church Union, desire to express our warm appreciation of the statement on the subject of Intercommunion at meetings of the Joint Committee and at Retreats organized by it, which was issued by the Episcopal Synod in February, 1932.

'We wish to assure our brethren of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon that we fully recognise the difficulties which stand in the way of any larger permission while union is still only under consideration, and we desire most heartily to reciprocate the goodwill which was expressed in their message to us on the subject.

'The extent to which we have been able at the meeting of the Joint Committee this year to enjoy united fellowship in the service of Holy Communion has enriched our spiritual life, has brought us closer together in Christ, and has done much to advance the movement toward the union of the Churches, for which we all hope and pray.'

Intercommunion Now

(From 'The Bishop's Letter' in the Madras Diocesan Magazine)

I must say a word on this subject as it has caused many searchings of heart, and much misunderstanding both in India and in England.

The request arose from the fact that at the Joint Committees on Union, the atmosphere of spiritual nearness and the manifest leading of the Holy Spirit made many feel that this should be consummated in the highest service of all—the Holy Communion. The members of the other two Churches therefore asked whether on such strictly limited occasions, the well-understood rule might be relaxed. They did not ask for a general rule or any pronouncement on ministries generally. They asked for what might be called in another connection a 'dispensation' for the Anglican members of the committees on certain specified occasions. Our Episcopal Synod being not agreed merely said that if any members feel compelled by the spiritual experience to which all bore witness, it could not condemn them. The occasions are definite: the need is temporary: after union the matter does not arise, for the agreement provides for individual consciences. It was left therefore to the individuals: it was not a political demonstration. I myself did not take advantage of the permission because our own Diocesan Synod had definitely pronounced against it and I felt I must respect their opinion. That attitude was entirely understood by all parties concerned. Those who have felt such great apprehension lest the

'one ministry' which is an agreed necessity of union should be imperilled, seem perhaps to stress what was not asked for—a political demonstration, that there may be in the one Church of Christ several competitive ministries, deriving their authority from different sources. That is a position incompatible with union and is excluded definitely from the Scheme of Union.

It is above all things necessary that people should realize how flagrantly we are transgressing Christ's command and defeating His purpose by our divisions and pray and work for the union of His Church in the world. And in India, if we are to be effective witnesses to Him in the future we must not waste our strength in competitive efforts but must seek the blessing and the strength which come from obedience and co-operation.

An Observer's Impressions

(By Rev. A. J. Revnell, o.b.e., of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, in *Dnyanodaya*)

May I say as an observer that one only needs to have the privilege of being present at the Committee if he would be sure the Holy Spirit of God is leading our brethren in South India. The frankness and fellowship, the unostentatious but very real desire at every step to have the guidance of God, the careful and kindly consideration of every point of view and, behind it all, the single-minded passion for the establishment of the Kingdom of God in South India and for the union of His Church throughout the world, stamp the movement as of God. Its consummation will be not the end but the beginning of a Union throughout India, the beginning of that day when the world will believe because we are one. I am sure that not in vain do I hope that all Christians throughout India will join with our brethren in the South on Sunday, August 21st, and continually, in prayer and consecration, that we may be found a willing people in the day of His power.

Report

of the 10th Session of the Joint Committee on Union Bangalore, June 15—18, 1932

The Joint Committee on Union met at the United Theological College, Bangalore from Wednesday, June 15th, to Saturday, June 18th, 1932.

The following were present :—

Church of India, Burma and Ceylon—The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Dornakal (Convener), the Rt. Revs. the Bishops of Madras, Tinnevelly, and Nasik, Canon B. H. P. Fisher, Rev. Fr. J. C. Winslow, Revs. A. J. Appasamy, J. B. Gnanavolivu and John Kuriyan.

South India United Church—

Rev. Meshach Peter,	Rev. A. Silver,	Dr. C. I. David,
,, B. Samuel,	,, R. H. Eastaff,	Mr. C. J. Lucas,
,, N. H. Harris,	,, R. Robertson,	,, S. E. Selvam,
,, M. S. Taylor,	,, A. Rumpus,	Miss J. W. Inglis,
,, H. Sumitra,	,, J. J. Banninga, (Convener.)	Mr. G. V. Job.

Wesleyan Methodist Church—Rev. H. Gulliford (Convener), Rev. W. H. Spencer, Revs. S. M. Devadass, C. H. Monahan, W. A. Sanford, C. W. Posnett, W. E. Tomlinson, P. S. Rangaramanujam, N. G. Ponniah, S. A. Vedanayagam, P. Gurushanta and Messrs. S. Gnanapragasam, K. Monsingh, W. Jeevaratnam and W. H. Warren.

The following were also present as visitors :—

Revs. A. J. Revnell, A. M. Spencer, G. W. Harrison, G. A. F. Senaratna and Sa'adat-ullah.

The Bishop of Dornakal was appointed *Chairman* for the session.

The Bishop of Tinnevelly and the Rev. M. S. Taylor were appointed *Minutes Secretaries* of the session.

Rev. Dr. J. J. Banninga was appointed *Secretary* of the Joint Committee.

The Bishop of Nasik conducted *a Quiet Day* for the members of the Joint Committee on Wednesday June 15th, and the Holy Communion was celebrated on the following days by the Bishop of Madras, the Rev. W. H. Spencer, and the Rev. A. Silver.

MODIFICATIONS IN THE SCHEME OF UNION

(References in brackets to the various Churches indicate that the decision made was in answer to a proposal made by that Church. Reference to pages and Sections, etc., refer to the Revised Edition of the Proposed Scheme published by the C.L.S., Madras in 1931. Copies of this Scheme are obtainable from the Society at six annas per copy. This report should be read in conjunction with that edition of the Proposed Scheme. Since the Committee is looking forward to redrafting the whole Scheme into permanent documents for presentation to the Churches at a not distant date, it was not felt worthwhile to reprint the Proposed Scheme with these few alterations, since all these alterations, will appear in their proper place in the permanent documents to be published.)

1. General.

Report was made of action taken in the three Churches since the last meeting of the Joint Committee, and points proposed for discussion by the various Churches were noted.

It was agreed that the drafting of the final documents needed for the union should be taken up, and a *Drafting Committee*, consisting of the Bishop of Tinnevelly, Rev. H. Gulliford, Dr. J. J. Banninga, Rev. N. G. Ponniah and Mr. C. J. Lucas, was appointed, to report in the first instance to the Continuation Committee, and through them to the Joint Committee. It was agreed that the Basis of Union as finally drafted should include at least sections II, III, and IV of the present Scheme of Union, and should be considered as a historic document and as such unalterable. This document would not itself be included in the Constitution of the united Church, but sections thereof might be repeated in the Constitution, and there would be subject to the rules for alteration of the Constitution.

2. Section III-A, 1st para, p. 3. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that in lines 2 and 3, for the words 'the Redeemer of mankind' be substituted the words 'the Redeemer of the world, in whom men are saved by grace through faith'.

3. Section III-A, note at end, p. 4. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that the following be substituted for the note :—

'It is understood that the act of union will not debar any group or body entering the union from continuing, for the guidance of its teachers and the edification of the faithful, the use of any confession of faith which it has previously employed. The united Church will also be competent to issue supplementary statements for the same purpose, provided that these are not contrary to the truths of our religion revealed in the Holy Scriptures.'

4. Section III-A. (S.I.U.C.)

In view of the statements already made in section II and in section VII (II), page 28 of the Scheme with regard to the missionary responsibility of the Church, it was agreed that it was not necessary to add anything in section III-A.

5. Section III-B, first para, lines 1-3, p. 4. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that for the words 'the episcopate . . . . . faithful' be substituted the words 'episcopal, presbyterial and congregational elements'.

6. Section III-B first para. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that the Joint Committee has no objection to the insertion in the Basis of Union, as a foot-note or otherwise, of a statement by the S.I.U.C. of the sense in which they accept the historic episcopate.

7. Section III-B, first para, last sentence, p. 5. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that for the whole sentence be substituted the following :— 'But this acceptance does not bind the united Church to any particular theory concerning episcopacy or concerning orders of the ministry, and the united Church shall not require the acceptance of any such theory as a necessary qualification for its ministry, nor make it a determining factor in its relations with other Churches'.

8. Section IV-B, last para, p. 12. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that for the last sentence of the section, the following be substituted :—'After this period of thirty years the united Church must determine for itself whether exceptions to the rule of an episcopally ordained ministry shall continue to be made or not, and if so, of what nature, giving in their consideration full weight to the fundamental principles of the union, viz., that the ministry of the united Church must be a fully unified ministry, and that at the same time, full fellowship and communion must be maintained by the united Church with all those branches of the Church of Christ with which the uniting Churches now severally enjoy such fellowship, and that that fellowship must continually be widened and strengthened; provided that the status of those at that time already received as ministers in the united Church shall not be affected by any action which the united Church may then take.'

9. Section VI (5) p. 18. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that the following be substituted for the whole sub-section :—

'All persons who have been confirmed or have been admitted as communicants by any of the services of admission in use in any of the uniting Churches shall be recognised as communicants throughout the whole united Church; and the various methods employed in the uniting Churches for admission to communicant status may be continued in the Church after union unless by general agreement common forms of service shall be framed for use in the Church.'

This clause to be numbered (4), the present number (4) becoming number (5).

10. Section VII (I) A (1) p. 19. (Anglican.)

Resolved that the Constitution should provide that the teaching office of the bishops be declared to include the making of statements concerning the application of the faith of the Church to current problems as need might arise, such statements being made by them both in the exercise of their ministry in their several dioceses and as a body in public statements which might be issued from time to time, after consultation with representatives of the presbyters and laity, in accordance with rules laid down by the Synod,

no such statements having the force of legislation in the Church. The matter was remitted to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution.

11. SECTION VII (I) A (1) p. 19. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that a foot-note be added to the word 'Confirmation'.

'This does not affect the continuance of the custom of the Malabar Church Council of the S.I.U.C., where in accordance with the rule of the Basel Evangelical Mission, the presbyters administer confirmation.'

12. SECTION VII (I) A (3) p. 20. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that the question of the exact procedure to be laid down in the Constitution for the acceptance of candidates for ordination be remitted to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution.

13. SECTION VII (I) B (6), second sentence, p. 24. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that in line 5 of the para, for the words 'a majority of the members of the Executive Committee' be substituted the words 'at least two-thirds of the members of the Executive Committee'.

14. SECTION VII (I) B (7), p. 24. (Resolution 19 of last meeting.)

Report was made of the opinions of the three Churches with regard to the suggestion made by the Joint Committee at its last meeting with regard to the consecration of bishops, and it was agreed that that suggestion be accepted in substance and remitted to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution, suitable reference to the subject being also made in the Basis of Union.

The suggestion was that the following should be incorporated as a note :—

'In view of the common desire to carry over from the uniting Churches into the united Church all elements which may in any way contribute to the fullest expression of truths which have been valued in the Christian Church, it shall be permissible when desired by a Diocesan Council for presbyters to join with the bishops in the laying on of hands at the consecration of a bishop; provided that it always be remembered and taught that the true Consecrator is God to whom prayer is made.'

15. SECTION VII (I) C, p. 25. (Anglican.)

Resolved that it should be stated in this section that it is one of the special functions of presbyters to declare God's message of pardon to penitent sinners, and that the matter be remitted to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution.

16. SECTION VII (I) C (2) (vii), p. 25. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that after the words 'admission to communicant membership' the following words be added—'and to admit approved candidates to such

membership in accordance with the customs obtaining in the Church or in any diocese.'

17. Section VII (I) D (3), line 3, p. 26. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that before the words 'the Nicene Creed' be inserted two words 'the Apostles' Creed and'.

18. Section VII (II), p. 28. (Wesleyan.)

Resolved that there should be fuller reference to women in all that is said in the Constitution about the ministry of the laity, and that the matter be referred to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution.

19. Section VIII-C (7), p. 35. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that it be provided that if the bishops have stayed action in the Synod as provided in this section, the matter thus stayed be dealt with in accordance with the principles laid down in section XIII-A for alteration of the Constitution, and that the matter be remitted to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution.

20. Section IX-B, first para, p. 37. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that in line 3 for the words 'it will no doubt develop' might be substituted the words 'it may develop', and the last sentence of the para be omitted; and that the matter be remitted to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution.

21. Section IX-D, second para, p. 39. (S.I.U.C.)

Resolved that after the words 'may forbid their use in worship' be added the words 'or require it'.

22. Other Points.

(i) (S.I.U.C.)—*Resolved* that in the opinion of the Committee sufficient definition of the nature of the Church is given at various points of the Scheme, e.g., Section II (1) section VI (1).

(ii) (Anglican.)—*Resolved* that such explanation as might be desired of the attitude of the Anglican Church with regard to Confirmation should be included in the Basis of Union; and that such statement as was desired should be made with regard to the meaning of the pledge in section IV-B (3), and that these points be remitted to the Drafting Committee on the Constitution.

(iii) *Alterations during first 30 years.* (S.I.U.C., vide resolution quoted on pages 62, 63.)

Resolved that in view of the later resolution of the General Assembly of the S.I.U.C., no action need be taken.

23. Position of English Wesleyan Churches. (Reference from the Wesleyan members in last meeting of the Joint Committe, page 63.)

The Convener reported that they were now satisfied on this point, in view of the action taken about the Thirty Year Period.

OTHER MATTERS

24. Territorial Division, Administration, and Finance.

The Joint Committee agreed to the following principles :—

(i) That there should be in the united Church initially from 10 to 12 dioceses, possibly with assistant bishops in some cases.

(ii) That in the formation of dioceses it is desirable, where feasible, that a diocese should contain congregations of not less than two out of the three uniting Churches.

(iii) That the Church in each diocese should aim at ultimately taking full responsibility for the whole of the Christian work in the diocese, but that initially the existing systems of mission and other administration should remain as they are, except for such changes as are directly required by the union and by the formation of the dioceses, provided that where Missionary Societies desire, they may at once enter into relations with the dioceses and their diocesan council.

(iv) That the administrative bodies other than diocesan bodies which will thus function during the first years after the inauguration of union should be co-ordinated mutually and in relation to the dioceses by means of diocesan Committees or otherwise.

Resolved—

(*a*) That the Continuation Committee prepare a scheme for the formation of dioceses, and consider the questions that arise with regard to administration and finance in the dioceses and in relation to the foreign supporting bodies.

(*b*) That the Bishop of Madras (Convener), Revs. G. Parker and C. H. Monahan and Mr. W. H. Warren be appointed as a committee to study and advise concerning the effects of the union on the existing provident and pension funds and trust associations of the Churches and Missions taking part in the union, and report to the Continuation Committee.

25. Retreats and Conferences.

Resolved that it is most important to hold retreats and conferences in the various parts of the area, and that committees be appointed to arrange

for them in each of the various language areas with the following conveners :—

Tamil	Bishop of Tinnevelly
Telugu	Rev. W. Scopes
Kanarese	Rev. W. Tomlinson
Malayalam	Bishop of Travancore

Budget provision was made for help towards expenses of these retreats.

26. Donations by Dr. Mott.

The Secretary reported the receipt of donations from Dr. John R. Mott which have greatly assisted the work of the Joint Committee during the past two years and which will make it possible to continue the publication of 'Church Union.—News and Views' for the next year and provide for publications in the vernaculars, and for retreats, besides the travelling expenses of speakers and committee meetings.

Resolved that the Secretary be asked to write to Dr. John R. Mott expressing the deep gratitude of the Joint Committee to him for his donations which have so much assisted the work of the Committee.

27. A Message to the Churches.

Resolved that the Joint Committee recognises that if the result of union is to be, as stated in section II of the Scheme, 'not merely greater fellowship and peace within the Church and a greater eagerness for the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, but also a greater release of divine power and greater effectiveness for the establishment of His Kingdom on earth,' it is essential that the work of preparing the Churches for union should include a call for deeper penitence and renewal of spiritual life;

That for this purpose a message to the Churches be sent forth embodying both a call to union and a call to penitence, faith and prayer;

That Sunday, August 21st, be, as far as possible, kept in all the congregations of uniting Churches as a day of special prayer for union and as initiating a movement for increased prayer on behalf of the proposed union and for deeper understanding of its implication;

That in as many centres as possible retreat-conferences should be held emphasising the same two-fold call to union and to spiritual renewal and endeavouring to establish in each centre a group that will continue and develop the movement thus initiated.

A draft of the message to be sent out was accepted by the Committee, and a committee was appointed to prepare topics and suggestions for the Day of Prayer, the convener of the Committee on Publications to send the necessary notices and papers to the churches.

28. Union in North India.

Reports of recent proceedings in connection with Church union in North India were made by the Rev. A. M. Spencer and Rev. A. J. Reynell, and the Rev. H. Gulliford reported on the meeting held at Nagpur between representatives of the Churches taking part in the Scheme of Union in South India and of several of the Churches in North India. It was resolved that the Continuation Committee should arrange to send delegates, if invited, to meetings concerning Church union held in North India.

The Bishop of Tinnevelly } *Minute*
Rev. M. S. Taylor } *Secretaries.*

June 27—1932. J. J. Banninga, *Secretary.*

Articles

The Value of Episcopacy in the Twentieth Century

By Dr. Vernon Bartlet, Oxford

The Bishop of Gloucester's paper on 'The Value of Episcopacy in the Twentieth Century' has interested me greatly. He writes, as usual, with strong emphasis on the historical and practical aspects of the Episcopate, an office or rather function vital to the whole matter of Church unity and I agree with him in all that he says of a positive character on the subject. In particular I should like to associate myself with him when he speaks of the possibilities of the diocesan Bishop as spiritual leader, counsellor, and in a word 'Father in God'. It is just this paternal aspect of Episcopacy, as he uses the term, that I regard as most valuable in such a religion as the Christian, which is instinct with the spirit of personal love and the personal relations flowing from it. In this respect 'his position gives him', as Dr. Headlam rightly says, 'a unique opportunity', especially in fostering the sense of Brotherhood on a larger scale than the purely local, one in fact

of the universal type proper to the one Catholic or all-inclusive Church of which the one Christ is the recognised Head. Such comments then, as I have to offer are meant to make the ideal of a united Church, inclusive of Episcopacy, yet more inclusive still of all positive values to which history and practical experience bear witness.

For I cannot but feel that this paper, while wishful to find room for Congregationalism and its type of Episcopate—the original one, as I believe—rests on too external a view of it, one which for that very reason sees more clearly its defects than its merits. For it is only from personal experience of the inner life of a normal congregational church that the special values which it, more than any other church polity, finds to foster can adequately be realised and done justice to. Recognising, and cordially recognising, the special value of diocesan episcopacy in relation to the unity and solidarity of the Church as a whole—which Congregationalists recognise in idea more than most, yet have no adequate organized means of expressing in practice—I yet am convinced that even larger provision needs to be made for safeguarding the spirit and exercising the functions of Christian freedom, in the form of congregational or parochial autonomy within the bond of Diocesan and Catholic unity of faith and love, than has as yet attained formulated or detailed recognition in the Scheme for a united Church in South India. This would make the constitutional diocese, under the paternal lead of its Bishop, still more representative of the full, 'richly variegated' life and consciousness of the whole diocese than it can be otherwise. For the local church experience which the congregational 'bishops', called in the scheme 'presbyters' ('priests' is not a primitive Christian title for them and ever must suggest misleading associations as used of a ministry among those who themselves as 'priests unto God', as well as endowed with their share in the kingly function of control in His Kingdom), can bring to the diocesan consultative and legislative bodies, would thereby be greatly increased; while the vital flexibility of the whole working of the living Body of Christ, in all its parts, would be greater.

These supplemental emphases, with a view to the fuller expression of the total operations of the Spirit throughout the whole Church, are put forward as a contribution to the proper appreciation of the 'Episcopate' in the Church that is yet to be, out of the experience of the Church of the past, alike that of post-Reformation times and of the primitive age—the sub-apostolic in particular—which the Reformers themselves made their chief model. For the Ignatian 'bishop' was of the congregational, not the diocesan, type, albeit the course of later development down to the age of Cyprian and even down to the conversion of Constantine, was largely a

further legitimate adaptation of primitive principles of Church life and expanding conditions. And it is for the essential principles of local church fellowship as it existed under the 'historic episcopate' at its Ignatian stage, that I and many Congregationalists who favour the South Indian Scheme in its broad outlines plead, that they may be fully honoured in its final form.

Christian Unity

The Ministry in the Early Church

AN ARGUMENT FROM HISTORY

To the Editor of the Times

SIR,—No greater or more urgent question has come before our day and generation than that of Christian Unity: and with the question, by the providence of God, there comes a greater opportunity of solution than has hitherto occurred, or is likely to occur again, if neglected.

Nothing, we believe, would be in itself more according to the will of God, or more likely to convince mankind of the relevance of Christianity to the great contemporary world issues than a courageous and sustained movement towards the re-uniting of Christendom. Indications of increased desire for mutual understanding have multiplied among established communions, and reintegration has already taken place on a large scale in Canada and Australia, in English Methodism, and in the Church of Scotland. Urgent demand is now being made by young communities in different parts of the mission field, particularly in Persia, India, and China, for the removal of the scandal of a divided witness in non-Christian lands. It is from the mission field that matters are being brought to an issue for the Anglican Church. The South India Church Union Scheme, which seeks to translate into action the Appeal for Unity made by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, will be before the bishops of the whole Anglican Communion in the Lambeth Conference of 1930. They will then have to decide upon a line of policy which in its ultimate issue may largely determine the future of Christendom.

The present situation appears to us sufficiently to resemble that in which the Church found itself in the first and second centuries as to arouse the hope that the actual process by which fusion then took place may be repeated in our own day. This is good reason for studying afresh in the light of recent research the development of the ministry in the early Church, because some of the greatest practical difficulties of the present time are those which concern the ministry.

The fact of an actual succession in ministry from Apostolic times cannot now be fairly disputed. But this succession, where it existed, was a succession of presbyter-bishops (Acts xx. 17, 28), not of monarchial bishops. It was

not until well into the second century that a ministry of succession, receiving its authority through the ordering of a monarchial episcopate, by natural expansion or express adoption, became nearly universal in the Church. This expansion and final adoption was promoted and demanded by the special circumstances of the time—the growth of heresy and the stress of persecution.

The later theory of Apostolic Succession had its root in the belief that its purpose was to secure and transmit sacramental grace. It is quite clear, however, that the primary purpose of the ministry was to maintain order and discipline, and to secure continuance of the preaching of the Word—the teaching of Jesus and concerning Jesus. An official ministry responsible for its own succession was, and is, in a stronger position to do these things than a ministry popularly appointed. It is equally clear that this original function was considered of chief importance till late in the second century, appeal to the fact of episcopal successions being cited as a witness, not to the transmission of grace, but to continuous teaching of the same doctrine of Christ. Important as the sacraments of the Gospel were in the life of the primitive Church, the normal restriction of administration to the minister was originally a matter of seemliness and Church order. Baptism has never yet been completely restricted to the clergy, and the possibility of lay administration of the Eucharist was not ruled out even at the close of the second century.

The claim that a particular pattern of ministry was necessary to the gift of God's grace in the sacraments was formulated later and defined to safeguard the official ministry of the Church, just as a dogma of verbal inspiration was propounded to safeguard the canonical Scriptures. These dogmas, perhaps natural under earlier conditions of thought and life, cannot to-day be maintained, and in particular it is impossible as it is impious to deny reality to the sacraments of non-episcopal ministries.

In view of these considerations we feel bound to urge that there is no true ground of objection to be raised on these issues to the ministerial union of the Anglican with Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist communions on the basis of the common acceptance of the ancient threefold ministry; and that there should be no real ground of offence to Christian consciences in such provision for interim periods before all ministries have come to be episcopally ordained as is intended in the South India Church Union Scheme. The widespread present readiness at home and abroad to make episcopacy a rallying point of union (so long as it is unencumbered with traditionalist dogmatism) gives to the Anglican communion a special opportunity and responsibility. The Anglican view of orders since the Reformation has not been bound in theory or in practice to such an idea of validity as denies to those not episcopally ordained a true ministry of Word and Sacrament.

The Church of England, with its ancient episcopate on the one hand, and on the other its recognition of the moral and spiritual validity of the varied ministries of the Reformed Churches, is therefore in a position to contribute

invaluable help to the wide movement towards unity, and it is our sincere hope that the effort now being made to form a united Church in South India on an episcopal basis will not fail to secure wholehearted support where it has the best right to look for it.

We are, Sir, your obedient servants.

Arthur F. Alston, John N. Barran, A. Baines, F. R. Barry, J. F. Bethune Baker, R. Blakeney, H. E. D. Blakiston, R. Brook, V. J. K. Brook, F. C. Burkitt, R. J. Campbell, A. J. Carlyle, R. H. Charles, G. A. Chase, Gilbert Coleridge, H. Costley-White, G. G. Coulton, W. L. Paige Cox, J. M. Creed, R. S. Crippis, H. P. Cronshaw, D. Dawson-Walker, Percy Dearmer.

W. Moore Ede, P. Gardner Smith, J. G. Gordon, J. Battersby Harford, P. J. Heawood, A. D. Henwood, F. B. Heiser, H. St. B. Holland, R. T. Howard, G. J. Howson, G. F. Irwin, Hewlett Johnson, W. Guy Johnson, R. B. Jolly, R. H. Kennett, J. B. Lancelot, Henry M. Lawson, A. B. G. Lillingston, W. W. Longford, A. O. Lukyn-Williams, G. C. L. Lunt, Pat McCormic, A. J. M. Macdonald, W. H. Mackean, H. D. A. Major, C. H. S. Matthews, W. R. Matthews, R. A. Mitchell, W. D. Morrison, W. E. R. Morrow, Cyril Norwood, M. W. Patterson, C. E. Raven, J. H. Richards, M. R. Ridley, T. Guy Rogers, C. F. Russell, T. R. Sale, G. F. Saywell, W. Marshall Selwyn.

Albert C. Seaward, L. G. M. Sheldon, D. C. Simpson, Vernon F. Storr, W. S. Thatcher, J. H. Thorpe, G. C. Turner, A. V. Valentine-Richards, C. S. Wallis, R. Waterfield, E. W. Watson, C. C. J. Webb, W. Welchman, J. E. C. Weldon, Bp., J. L. White, A. T. P. Williams, Cecil W. Wilson, E. S. Woods, C. S. Woodward.

Dean Inge on the Unity of Christians in England

A sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on Whitsunday

From The Church of England Newspaper

'*Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*' (Eph. iv. 3).

The position of the Church of England is a curious one. Legally, we are the national Church—the nation on its religious side. And actually we are Catholic as opposed to sectarianism, as comprehending all legitimate varieties of Christian opinion. And yet only about half of those who attend places of worship in this country come to our churches, and the majority of the whole population are heathens so far as public worship is concerned.

I suppose many of us like to think of a time when our unhappy divisions may somehow be terminated, and when all Christians may make united efforts to Christianise the heathen, both abroad and in our towns and villages. I wish to offer a few reflections on the prospects of reunion.

THE CHURCH OF ROME

It is not necessary to say much about the prospects of reunion with the Church of Rome. There are many Churchmen who are deeply impressed with the grandeur and majesty of that ancient Church, and who are rather pathetically and needlessly anxious that we should be recognised by Rome as a true branch of the Catholic Church. A good many years ago some prominent Churchmen presented to the Vatican a carefully reasoned defence of our Anglican Orders, as lawfully transmitted from the Apostles. They knew that they had a very strong case, and hoped that the Pope, after weighing the evidence, might be willing to recognise in our bishops and priests true successors of the Twelve. The Vatican held a mock enquiry, and pronounced authoritatively, in a Latin decree, that the Anglican Orders are absolutely null and void. The same group has repeated the experiment more recently at Malines, with the same result. It was foolish to court these rebuffs, for the Roman Church could not possibly have decided otherwise without surrendering its most useful weapon, the claim to monopoly. The Roman Church is simply the successor of the Roman world-empire. It claims universal dominion, and will allow no national Church the right to independent existence. Since the Reformation it has become more and more centralised and despotic, and there is no likelihood at all that it will ever grant the slightest recognition to the English Church, except on terms of complete submission to the Pope. If a certain party in our Church would read real history, instead of handbooks written to support their own theories, they would see this very obvious fact, and recognise that reunion with Rome is, and probably always will be, an impossible dream.

Latin Christianity never has suited the northern Europeans, and never will. The split at the Reformation was quite inevitable. It made no difference in our position as part of the Catholic Church; there was no breach of continuity with our own past. It was essentially a revolt against *Rome*, and the independence then won is not likely to be voluntarily given up. It is foolish to attach any importance to the pretensions of the Latin-Irish mission in England.

We have to chronicle a solid gain in the mutual recognition between our own Church and the Lutheran Episcopal Church of Sweden, to which the late Archbishop Söderblom contributed so much lustre. Negotiations for mutual recognition between ourselves and the great Orthodox Eastern Church are more important. The prospects at present are said to be favourable, and I earnestly hope that the efforts of the Bishop of Gloucester and others will be successful. Let us turn now to the Protestant Nonconformists. Sectarian Protestantism is the democracy of religion. It rests not upon the Bible, or any other authority, but on private judgment and private experience. It is the

lonely wrestling of the soul with God. When it tried to form Churches, it was obliged to find its principle of authority in the Bible, or in a doctrinal formula. Its tendency was to split up into small bodies—the 250 sects which exist at this day in England.

EXCHANGE OF PULPITS

So far as one can see, there is no reason, except the spirit of separatism, why most of these sects should be divided from each other, or from our Church. As far as doctrine goes, they have more than half forgotten the grounds on which they separated. Their ministers exchange pulpits without any objection on the part of the congregations. Some of them have become partially Catholicised. Instead of the ostentatious hideousness of the old dissenting chapels, we now see in every town ornate structures in what is meant to be Gothic style. In most of the sects, Church forms and observances are creeping in. They are also liberalised. In Biblical criticism scholars belonging to these bodies take a prominent part, and their ministers are allowed great latitude. There is a movement now to reunite some of these Protestant bodies. In Scotland reunion has been achieved.

It is a strange state of affairs, especially when we reflect that the Church of England is split from top to bottom by differences of opinion, and cannot even make up its mind whether it is a Catholic or a Protestant Church. When we sing in church, "We are not divided, All one body we," the enemy is inclined to laugh at us.

DISSENTERS WERE WRONG

And yet I am sure that we are right in holding together, and that the dissenters were wrong in flying apart. Beneath all our acrimonious debates, and all our sharp divergences in belief and practice, there is a deep underlying unity both among ourselves and with the truly religious minds in other bodies. When we pray to God or praise and thank Him, we rise at once above our unhappy divisions. We use each others' prayers, we sing each others' hymns, without any sense of strangeness. In studying Christian mysticism, I have read the devotional literature of all ages and sections of Christendom, and even of other religions; and really, in so far as it is truly spiritual, it is all very much alike.

Any devout Christian can enjoy and profit by St. Augustine's Confessions, the Imitation of Christ, Bishop Jeremy Taylor and Bishop Wilson, John Bunyan, and Keble's Christian Year. The reunion of Christendom has already taken place when we say our prayers; or rather, its unity has never been broken in this region.

Again, in the study there are no schisms. In the scholar's library, Romanist and Anglican and Nonconformist stand peaceably side by side on the shelf. We exchange our ideas, learn from and teach each other. The republic of learning knows nothing of denominations.

NO SEPARATION IN GOOD WORKS

Again, in good works there is no separation. If we are convinced of the necessity of some great social or moral reform, our allies are those who agree with us, not those who worship under the same roof. The Temperance movement is interdenominational; and other associations for moral reformation are supported by Churchmen and Dissenters sitting on the same platform.

Lastly, in love for our Lord Jesus Christ there is a real and fundamental bond of union. Indeed, this is a bond which extends beyond all the organised bodies of Church members in this country. Those who know the British working man, who, as we all regret, generally absents himself from all places of worship, and acknowledges no allegiance to any Christian body, say that he has a most genuine reverence and admiration for the character of Jesus Christ. If we take St. Paul's test of Christianity—'all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity'—we are a Christian nation.

ESSENTIAL AND DEEP-SEATED

Is it not plain that the things which divide us are comparatively superficial, while the things which should unite us are essential and deep-seated? And if this is so, is there not ground for hope that divisions which can no longer be rationally justified may pass away and be forgotten in course of time? Schisms are very easy to begin, and very difficult to end; but they do end in time, if there is a central Church which is able to satisfy the just claims of the separatists, and to preserve the various elements of truth which have given each sect its vitality.

The Church of England is the only body which can ever be the real Catholic Church in England. Of course, if it is ever to gather in the Protestant sects, it must acquire a greater elasticity than it at present possesses. Reunion can only come about through a loose federation of existing sects. The voluntary associations would continue to govern themselves, much as the Dominicans and Franciscans and Jesuits have their own government and their own systems within the Church of Rome. Hitherto our system has been too rigid to admit of this; we have been much less clever than the Roman Church. We lost the Wesleyans, I believe, much more from the stiff inflexibility of our parochial system than from any other cause. So far as doctrine goes, there is not much to distinguish the Methodists from Evangelical Churchmen.

A HOPEFUL SIGN

It is a hopeful sign that many dissenters are coming to see the drawbacks of narrow sect-life. But let us make no mistake. They will not admit that the commissions of their ministers are irregular, or their sacraments invalid, nor that episcopacy is anything more than the most convenient and efficient form of Church government. If the Church of England takes a stiff uncompromising line on this question, nothing can be done. Reunion of the Reformed Churches is a hope for the future. I do not think that any of us will live to see it. But we may do what in us lies to smoothe the way towards a union of

hearts, a real English Church, which shall include all Christians in England except those who excommunicate themselves. We must look for friends and allies where they really are, not paying much attention to labels which are sometimes libels and always misleading. We must realise clearly that Christianity is in its roots individual, and so in a sense Protestant; but that since it can only flourish in a Church, it must be also in a sense Catholic. We cannot do without either one or the other. For the present and immediate future we can resolve to eschew anger, wrath, bitterness, clamour and all malice.

The method of Christianity, when it is true to the Spirit of Christ, is to overcome evil with good, not by rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing. We must learn to tolerate even each others' intolerance, but we need not be intolerant ourselves. I have often administered the Holy Communion to non-Anglicans, and I am always glad to do so.

But let us remember that spiritual unity is better than institutional reunion, and easier to get; and (if I may make the suggestion) let us sometimes add to our daily prayers that beautiful collect hidden away in the Accession Service at the end of our Prayer Books: 'O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace, give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great danger we are in through our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice and whatsoever else may hinder us from Godly union and concord; that as there is but one body and one spirit, and one hope of our calling, so we may henceforth be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Clippings

The Confirmation Rubric

A Church Association Statement

The following statement has been issued by the Church Association, desiring to 'call public attention to the following facts:—

'The Church of England expressly disclaims for Confirmation the character of a Sacrament of the Gospel, and esteems the Romish and Eastern methods of Confirmation as a "corrupt following of the Apostles". (Article XXV.)

'Our Church's own rite differs in its fundamental conceptions from these superstitious services; but is closely allied in every essential particular to Confirmation as practised by the Protestant Churches of the Continent, being designed to furnish adequate security that those who have been baptised as infants shall personally confirm their baptismal vows and make Christian profession before admission to the Lord's Table.

'It is theologically and historically untenable to assert that the 'Confirmation Rubric" was intended to debar from Communion all who have not been confirmed according to the Anglican rite.

'The custom of our Church from the time the rubric was enacted till to-day has been to remember that the Holy Table is not the Church's Table but "the Table of the Lord", and to leave access to it limited only by the conscience of the would-be communicant, and the discretion of the incumbent who is entitled to refuse to give this Sacrament only upon lawful cause.

'Neither the bench of bishops nor the Convocations have any right to abrogate or alter any rubric in the existing Prayer-book, which, having Statutory authority, can be lawfully altered only by Statute.'

Christian Reunion in England

Statement by World's Evangelical Alliance

The World's Evangelical Alliance cannot but be deeply interested in all that concerns Church Union and fellowship. It has taken note of the Resolutions of Intercommunion brought before the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, and will prayerfully await the report of the Committee to which they have been referred. In view of the conversations on Christian unity with the Free Churches of England, which have been resumed by invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Council of the Alliance desire to express their view, which is shared by very many in all Reformed Churches, that these discussions can only become fruitful as they are accompanied by acts of unity. They feel particularly that recognition of the fact that ministries which imply a sincere intention to preach Christ's Word and administer the Sacraments Christ has ordained, and to which authority so to do has been solemnly given by the Church concerned, are real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church, and that the Lord's table should be open to all who accept these ministries. Although the Council fully recognise that the Church of Christ in all its branches must have its own safeguards against unworthy approach to the table of the Lord, they believe that a way can be found of securing the intercommunion of the Anglican Church and the Evangelical Free Churches. We shall continue to pray that the labours of Convocation, of the Joint Committee convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, may lead to the recognition of the truth: '*Unum corpus sumus in Christo*'.

Christian Unity

A community Lord's Supper was recently observed in the University Christian Church, Berkley, California. The officiating elders represented the Methodist, Baptist (Negro), and Japanese Churches. The deacons who assisted represented the Christian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Northern Methodist, Southern Methodist, and Congregational Churches. A Filipine pastor assisted in the service and Bishop Parsons of the Protestant Episcopal Church gave the principal address.

(*The Indian Witness.*)

Intercommunion

The Bishop of Gloucester in the Gloucester Diocesan Magazine

I have been led to make these remarks by the difficulties which have been raised over the question of Intercommunion. I have recently, for example, received a Resolution of the Oxford Conference of Evangelical Churchmen approving of the proposals made by the Bishops with regard to such Intercommunion. I am in favour of those proposals, but certainly the tone in which they have been received, and the tone in which they have been opposed, make very unpleasant reading. Each side seems to have approached them largely in a party spirit. But I should like to make the following observations of my own on the point:—

1. I do not believe that the proposals which are being made in certain directions for widespread Intercommunion between those who are still separated from one another are either right or wise. We are not likely to make a real united Church by ignoring differences and considering that they are a matter of small importance. I see no reason for doubting the wisdom of recognising that Intercommunion should be the goal and not the means of reunion. There will be neither reverence nor sincerity in joint communions where there is no real fellowship or desire for fellowship.

2. But that is no reason why we should administer the rules of the Church with excessive rigidity. There is a widespread custom of admitting to Communion those who are not

technically qualified when they are cut off from the ministrations of their own Church. That seems to me the right and proper thing to do. I always advise it when I am asked, and I have acted in accordance with it myself.

3. Equally when our own people are precluded from receiving the Sacraments in their own Church, I see no reason why they should be prohibited from Communion with those who are ready to receive them.

4. When a body of Christian people are working together earnestly and sincerely for Christian unity, and feel they have been drawn nearer to one another, I think it right that they should meet in Communion. When the Theological Committee on Faith and Order met at Gloucester, I invited all the members to join in Communion in the Chapel of the Palace. It was in accordance with the Lambeth Resolutions, and I have no doubt that it was right.

Such proposals for what is sometimes called 'economic' Intercommunion do not mean any relaxation of general rules, but they mean that the spiritual edification of the individual Christian may be held to be more important than rigid adherence to Ecclesiastical rule. There is widespread 'economic' Intercommunion for members of the Orthodox Church in America. It is quite customary for members of the Church of Scotland to communicate in the Church of England in this country, and always has been. Such customs do not make for indifference, but arise from the exercise of a proper Christian charity.

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